

NGAC Cultural & Historical Geospatial Resources Subcommittee Update



NGAC Meeting
October 28, 2020

Committee Membership

Garet Couch, Chair

Gar Clarke

Mark Reichardt

Byron Bluehorse

Doug Adams

Federal Liaison: Deidre McCarthy

FGDC Liaison: John Mahoney

Protecting Federal Cultural and Historical Geospatial Resources: A Review and Recommendations

The National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) Subcommittee on Cultural and Historical Geospatial Resources conducted a research study in 2017- 2018.

The objective of this research was to understand the issues and challenges associated with the protection, preservation and use of cultural and historical geospatial datasets and other derived geospatial information that is created, maintained, and/or managed by Federal agencies.

The subcommittee issued a report of its findings and recommendations that was adopted by the NGAC in September of 2019.

Protecting Federal Cultural and Historical Geospatial Resources: A Review and Recommendations

The subcommittee held a briefing for Joy Beasley, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science, and Executive Champion, FGDC Cultural Resources Data Theme in February of 2020

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) Digital Information Task Force Recommendations and Action Plan in April of 2020. Includes references to NGAC report: “The ACHP should support the recommendations of the NGAC report on Protecting Federal Cultural and Geospatial Resources (September 2019), including recommendations on developing guidelines for the management, access control, and exchange of geospatial data associated with sensitive cultural and historic resources and data sharing agreements and strategies.”

The subcommittee held a briefing for FGDC Cultural Resources Subcommittee members in June of 2020

Protecting Federal Cultural and Historical Geospatial Resources: A Review and Recommendations

The FGDC Cultural Resources Subcommittee provided a written response to the NGAC Cultural and Historical Geospatial Resources subcommittee recommendations. The FGDC Cultural Resources Subcommittee is in full support of the recommendations and has developed the following prioritization to address the recommendations.

- ❖ Priority 1 (Recommendation 4): Finish the Cultural Resource Spatial Data Transfer Standards
- ❖ Priority 2 (Recommendation 1): Define cultural resource spatial data
- ❖ Priority 3 (Recommendation 3): Data sharing agreements and strategies
- ❖ Priority 4 (Recommendation 2): Guidelines on the management, access control, and exchange of geospatial data associated with sensitive cultural data
- ❖ Priority 5 (Recommendation 5): Develop a training strategy and materials

Next Steps

- The subcommittee will continue to monitor the implementation or the recommendations.

Potential New Study Topics

- Obfuscation of Lidar data in areas that contain cultural and/or historical resources.
 - Lidar data has been used to identify sites with good reliability and is an effective tool for identifying cultural and historical sites.
 - Concern from the community that using Lidar data to locate sites over vast areas could result in looting and destruction of sites. Due in part to the lack of adequate protections and law enforcement.
 - Would obfuscating data be outpaced by technology and or private sector collections?
 - Would making recommendations to enact better protections of sites/enforcement assist?

Potential New Study Topics

* Not necessarily a topic for the cultural and historical geospatial resources subcommittee

- The need for a national authoritative dataset defining the boundaries for addressing authorities
 - In a number of rural and or Tribal communities there are often times gaps or overlaps in addressing authorities which leave locations without addresses and in some cases locations with multiple addresses.
 - With the COVID-19 pandemic requiring individuals to stay home this has significantly increased the amount of packages being delivered to homes. A side effect is this has raised awareness and the need for accurate addresses to a new level which is opening up conversations for collaboration between entities that has not previously existed. It has also brought to light that a dataset depicting addressing authorities at a national level isn't known to exist.

Thanks

NGAC Cultural & Historical Geospatial Resources Subcommittee